

# MEASURING YOUR BLOOD SUGAR

Testing your blood sugar often can help you control your diabetes.

Check your blood sugar regularly when:

- Taking diabetes pills or insulin
- Pregnant
- Blood sugar is hard to control
- Blood sugar results are low
- Blood sugar results are high and your urine has ketones
- Low blood sugar occurs without the usual warning signs
- Changing eating habits
- Taking certain medications, such as steroids or liquid medications

Check your blood sugar at different times during the day

- Upon waking, before breakfast
- 2 hours after the start of a meal
- Before meals
- When you feel blood sugar is too high or too low

A glucometer is a machine that measures your blood sugar.

### Choosing a glucometer

- Does your healthcare provider prefer a certain glucometer?
- What is the cost of the glucometer, batteries, and test strips
  - Which glucometers are covered by your insurance company?
  - Is there a rebate toward the cost of the glucometer?
- Ease of use
  - Some glucometers have more steps to follow than others.
  - Are the numbers easy to read?
  - Some glucometers allow you to stick your forearm, thigh, or fleshy part of your hand instead of your fingertip. Read the manufacturer's instructions.
  - Is the glucometer easy to clean?
- How to make sure the glucometer is accurate
  - Some glucometers have special coding or a computer chip that must be changed, or calibrated, with every new bottle of test strips.
  - Some glucometers have a “control” substance to check the machine.
  - Most glucometers are accurate and precise if used properly.

# Starting Insulin – a patient guide

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Glucometers may be a little different in how they are used. Here are some general steps.

- Wash your hands.
- Insert a test strip in your glucometer. This often turns the glucometer on, but some glucometers may have an on-off switch.
- Using a lancet, prick your fingertip. You may want to prick the side of your fingertip near the fingernail to avoid soreness on the end of your finger.
- Gently squeeze or massage your finger until a drop of blood forms.
- Touch and hold the edge of the test strip to the drop of blood.
- Often your glucometer will “beep” when there is enough blood.
- Your blood sugar result will appear on the glucometer’s display.



Write down your blood sugar results each time you take them. Most glucometers come with log books, or you can use a notebook. Some glucometers can store blood sugar results. Be sure you have the date and time set and know how to use a glucometer with a memory. Show your record to your healthcare provider at every visit.

Poor meter readings result from:

- Dirty glucometer
- Glucometer or test strip that is not at room temperature
- Old or outdated test strips
- Glucometer that is not calibrated to the bottle of test strips used by that glucometer
- Too much or too little blood on the test strip

Your healthcare provider can help you understand how to use your glucometer.

Place label here.